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Justin Smith Morrill
Memorial Lecture

A National Resource— A National Challenge The 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities



United States
Department of
Agriculture





Dr. William P. Hytche

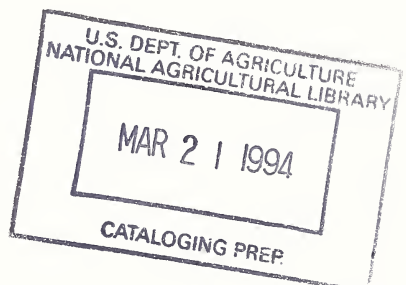
Dr. William P. Hytche is President of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, formerly known as Maryland State College.

A native of Oklahoma, Dr. Hytche came to Maryland in 1960 after teaching in the public schools of Ponca City, Oklahoma, and at Oklahoma State University. During his career at the University of Maryland

Eastern Shore, he has served as an instructor and later as Department Chairman in Mathematics, Dean of Student Affairs, and Chairman of the Division of Liberal Studies. He was appointed Acting Chancellor in 1975, a position which became permanent in 1976.

Dr. Hytche is the recipient of numerous honors and awards, including Academy of Arts and Science Fellow at Oklahoma State University and the National Association for Equal Opportunities in Higher Education Distinguished Alumni of the Year honors. He also has been honored as an educator and administrator, having received the Maryland Outstanding Faculty Member Award and the Ponca City, Oklahoma, Public Schools Outstanding Teacher Award as well as the United States Corps of Engineers Most Outstanding Administrative Award. He has been listed in Personalities of the South, Outstanding Educators of America, and Who's Who in the World.

A noted civic leader, Dr. Hytche has been vice chairman of the Tri-County Boy Scouts of America, and is a member of the Del-Mar-Va Advisory Board and Council and the Somerset County Economic Development Commission. In 1978, the Governor of Maryland appointed him to the Holly Center Citizens Advisory Board. Dr. Hytche also has memberships on the PGH Medical Center Board of Trustees, the Aquarium Advisory Board, and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges Executive Committee. He is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Phi Sigma Society, and Phi Delta Kappa, and serves as Secretary of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education.



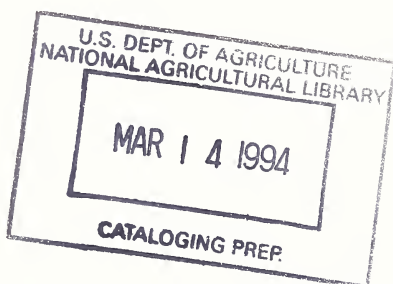


A National Resource— A National Challenge The 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities

Justin Smith Morrill Memorial Lecture
Presented by
Dr. William P. Hytche
at the Annual Meeting of
National Association of State Universities
and Land-Grant Colleges on the occasion of
the Centennial of the 1890 Land-Grant
Colleges and Universities

Grand Hyatt Hotel
Washington, D.C.
November 20, 1989

The Cooperative State Research Service, USDA, sponsors
the prestigious Justin Smith Morrill Memorial Lecture
as a tribute to Justin Smith Morrill—the author of the
land-grant legislation.





I am delighted and honored to have the opportunity to present the 1989 Justin Smith Morrill Memorial Lecture. As we embark on the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Second Morrill Act of 1890, I feel a particular kinship with Morrill's quest for a truer expression of the American educational ideal. Moving into our second century, we must be as persistent in the protection and development of the 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities as Morrill was in his 30-year battle to make these very institutions a reality.

Through the years we have been meeting the educational demands of blacks in America as well as research demands of developing nations and rural America. These institutions have proved to be a national resource fervently striving to meet national challenges.

The Second Morrill Act: A Crisis Averted

In the early 1800's, higher education was restricted primarily to classical and theological studies taught within a theoretical context. During the mid-1800's, there was a major reform movement toward a more democratic and utilitarian quality of education focusing on the practical application of physical and natural sciences for the production of skilled farmers and factory workers. Educational concepts covered a broad spectrum of disciplines, and schools were created to advance agriculture, industrial and mechanical arts, and trade. The underlying theme was that agriculture and science should be essential elements in the curriculum complemented by mechanical arts to improve speed and efficiency.

Prior to 1860, higher education was strongly elitist with no access for members of working-class families. This situation moved legislators to establish universities for the rest of society, which ultimately led to the passage of the First Morrill Land-Grant Act of 1862. The primary tenet of the Morrill Act of 1862 was that all Americans should have equal access to higher education and occupations in agriculture and the industrial and mechanical arts. The Morrill Act promoted the philosophy that citizens, regardless of social and economic class, should be afforded the opportunity to achieve according to their own abilities and desires.

In 1865, however, there was a tremendous crisis in the American education system and the land-grant movement. With the emancipation of slaves came the unleashing of a potential work force of 4 million blacks who were primarily illiterate and dysfunctional in a rapidly changing economic climate. Despite dramatic changes in the

economy and the emergence of an unsettling era of political chaos, the Nation showed little interest in support of equal educational opportunities. Although there were compelling and practical reasons for the Nation to invest in equality of opportunity, conservatism prevailed and segregation was reinforced. Entrenched resistance from local and State governments prohibited schools and higher education institutions from receiving resources essential to creating opportunities, while Federal laws sanctioned the separate but equal doctrine. These laws were embedded in the social fabric of American higher education.

Although unintentional, a significant crisis in American education was averted when the Congress enacted the Second Morrill Act in 1890. It was unintentional because the States viewed the legislation as an opportunity to obtain additional funding for 1862 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities. Nevertheless, Congress, in its wisdom, recognized the importance of a national investment in expanding access for neglected segments of the population during a period that was symbolized by Reconstruction.

While the Industrial Revolution was taking shape and powerful forces for educational reform were being generated, the Congress in the Justin Smith Morrill Act of 1890 set a precedent with the stipulation that black Americans be included in the mainstream of the U.S. educational system. Southern and border States opposed this inclusion and chose to exercise an option provided in the Act by creating separate institutions for blacks—"and you know the rest of the story."

Consequently, today we pay tribute to the foresight and wisdom of Justin Smith Morrill. One hundred years ago, he inspired his congressional colleagues to enfranchise black Americans by making higher educational opportunities accessible to former slaves via these prestigious 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities.

The Early Struggle

Seventeen States, including West Virginia, agreed to establish separate institutions for blacks. Prior to 1890, however, black schools had been founded in 12 of these States and these were awarded land-grant status. Between 1891 and 1909, the remaining five States created black land-grant colleges or universities. Much later, West Virginia rescinded its land-grant university status while Tuskegee Institute (now University) was afforded all the privileges stipulated in the 1890

Act. Today, there are 17 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities located in 16 States.

Despite the absence of land and fiscal support comparable to their 1862 counterparts, these institutions pursued research, teaching, and public service activities through a sustained struggle for racial equality and opportunity.

Blacks in the Early Years

The struggle in the early years to rise from slavery, and the need for black teachers to provide basic skills, training, and primary education, required that normal schools or colleges assume responsibility for the training of teachers in education, agriculture, home economics, and industrial arts. Progress occurred in spite of the absence of basic resources, and new standards of excellence significantly broadened opportunities for black Americans in other sectors of the Nation.

The first black college/university to be designated as a land-grant college was Alcorn State University, which was founded in 1871. Its land-grant status was granted under the aegis of the First Morrill Act of 1862. However, it was not designated such status by the Mississippi Legislature until 1878.

The period of the 1870's through the 1890's was very lean. Many notable examples of courage and determination occurred in an effort to educate black people. At what is now Alabama A&M University, for example, founded in 1875 by William Hooper Councill, the annual State appropriation of \$4,000 was inadequate to support the institution; therefore, President Councill and his entire faculty contributed their salaries to keep the school open.

During this period, one of Councill's contemporaries, Booker T. Washington, founded Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in 1881 and became the primary fund-raiser among northern philanthropists contributing to black colleges. As the inscription on his monument on the campus at Tuskegee University states, "He lifted the veil of ignorance from his people and pointed the way to progress through education and industry."

A greater pioneer in scientific research during the early years was George Washington Carver, who in 1896 founded the first agricultural experiment station at a predominantly black university. Carver became famous for his groundbreaking research on peanuts, sweet

potatoes, soybeans, and cowpeas. It is rather remarkable to note that we are still conducting research on these crops, which speaks to the progressive nature of agricultural science. Carver's research was dedicated to the improvement of nutrition for tenant farm families. His guiding principle was the enhancement of the quality of life, a philosophy which has become the motto of the 1890 community.

Thus, Carver became a living example of "the practical application of science to the wants and welfare of man." Councill, Washington, Carver, and many more black leaders broadened the national consensus for economic well-being through education. These dreams and desires have been eloquently captured in the missions of 1890 institutions and in the hearts and minds of those who have benefited from this revolutionary investment in democracy.

The 1890 Land-Grant Universities have played a major role in the formation of the land-grant movement. They pioneered resident instruction programs, conducted landmark research, and extended its benefits to the people of rural and neglected communities. The latter was advanced by Thomas M. Campbell, who was inspired by Booker T. Washington to conduct agricultural demonstration programs in rural Alabama.

The frontiers of knowledge and the improvement of the quality of life even permeated international territories early in the development of the black land-grant system. In 1899, students and faculty at Tuskegee, under the leadership of Carver, participated in cotton production research in Togo, West Africa.

A distinguished record of teaching, research, and public service symbolizes the legacy of 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities—a legacy that is inextricably linked to the prominence of such leaders as Horace Mann Bond, Mary McCloud-Bethune, John Hope Franklin, Benjamin Mays, Charles Drew, Charles Turner, Frederick D. Patterson, Walter Massey, Esther Hopkins, Percy Julian, and Carter G. Woodson, to name a few. These visionaries continue to inspire our institutions to pursue excellence while promoting full equality of opportunity.

A National Resource

During the 1950's and 1960's, the escalation of the Civil Rights movement brought about tremendous pressures to desegregate public systems of education. Desegregation litigation that was originally heard in 1849 was brought before the U.S. Supreme Court under the

infamous Plessy doctrine, while violations of the Fourteenth Amendment were being challenged in South Carolina, Virginia, Delaware, and other States. The question of the constitutionality of separate but equal public education dominated the Nation's social agenda for more than a decade.

Black primary education withstood the pressure to desegregate, but many black secondary schools became junior high schools, and black colleges were faced with threats of mergers or closure. These challenges forced the land-grant community to mobilize resources to preserve their tradition of excellence and to continue toward the development of competitive academic programs. During these periods of political turbulence, public awareness of the role and contributions of black higher education reached a new high. The historical record of black achievements in higher education provided the most plausible argument for support of historically black colleges and universities. The unique character of black Land-Grant Colleges and Universities contributed to the creation of academic and social programs that enriched the educational and cultural experience for black and multiethnic student bodies.

One of the great strengths of the black land-grant system lies in our academic richness and diversity. During the 1970's, approximately 20 percent of the students enrolled in agriculture at the 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities were nonblack, while 5 percent of the students enrolled in agriculture at 1862 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities were nonwhite. Today, the 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities continue to be the primary source of minority graduates in the agricultural sciences. Our institutions enroll approximately 35 percent of all minorities enrolled in agriculture, but graduate approximately 65 percent of black recipients of bachelor's degrees in agricultural sciences.

Current trends suggest that the 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities will continue to be the primary source of black undergraduate students in agriculture, given the renewed interest and commitment to the survival of black colleges and universities. Economic and social exigencies, local and national, demand that our institutions offer the brilliant and the not so brilliant an opportunity to engage in the extraordinary experience of higher learning. Our students reflect the economic and social conditions of black America. It is within this context that we tailor our enrichment and cultural programs. Our students come from less affluent backgrounds, require substantial

financial assistance, and yet demonstrate a strong desire to transcend the limited boundaries of poverty and social neglect. Thus, we must continue to recognize these institutions as vital national resources. This recognition was fostered in 1965 through the efforts of Secretary of Agriculture Clifford M. Hardin, Dr. R.D. Morrison, Dr. C.A. Williams, and others who challenged the Nation to come to grips with the failure to build on the highest ideals of the land-grant philosophy.

Consequently, Public Law 89-106, enacted in 1965, gave the USDA the legal and political flexibility to fund research at our colleges and universities. We received our first funding in 1967; this was subsequently followed by extension funding in 1977. This funding forged a great partnership between the USDA and the 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities.

A National Challenge

The decade of the 1980's created significant new challenges for higher education and particularly for our Land-Grant Colleges and Universities. There were attempts to dismantle programs and dilute the land-grant mission. Some challenged our existence, while others questioned the relevancy and value of our academic programs. The public and the land-grant community became very concerned about the decline and devaluation of our undergraduate programs. One could almost equate the political tension that emerged with the evolutionary land-grant movement of the 1860's. The debate centered on the following:

- restoring integrity to undergraduate curricula;
- creating more relevant academic programs to meet the needs of the agricultural industry and society, in general;
- maintaining our scientific expertise;
- and maintaining our worldwide competitive edge in agricultural research and development.

This new debate, however, differed from the debate of the 1860's and 1890's in that it was more vociferous and intellectual, and had greater economic implications. One school of thought was that we have become so agriculturally efficient that we have researched ourselves out of business. The efficiency of production has led to a farm crisis of such national magnitude that agriculture or a career in the field has been relegated to the lowest level of options among our youth.

It is ironic that the arguments of 100 years ago are being echoed today. The mission of the land-grant universities a century ago was "to educate people for the purpose of stimulating agricultural production, improving the quality of life, and for revitalizing rural America, while producing better citizens in urban, as well as rural, America."

Today we are still attempting to revitalize rural America and motivate our youth to be better citizens. We have not conquered the problems of rural to urban migration; the great gulf between the haves and have-nots continues to widen; and the severe problems of crime, drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, poverty, and declining employment prevail. Is our continuing struggle with the problems of 100 years ago an indictment of our land-grant system? Have we failed to address the "people" problems that were the basic philosophy and intent of Justin Smith Morrill and his colleagues? To both questions, I would emphatically respond—"No." Although the problems are complex and systematic, we must continue to strengthen our ability to *nurture* the minds and lives of the people we serve. The story of the black land-grant system is the story of ideals and industry—we use a mere 3 percent of our labor force to produce the Nation's total food supply; we are the best-fed Nation in the world; we export a significant amount of our produce; we are the number one industry in sustaining the world economy; and we are the premier leader in agricultural research. There are skeptics who still regard the land-grant system as a misnomer and agriculture as a mechanic avocation. We must raise public awareness about the critical role that agriculture has played in feeding the Nation and in developing the wealth of our natural resources. We must also sound the alarm that it is time for agriculture to turn its sights to future generations.

The Next Century

As we celebrate our Centennial, we must look beyond the past and compound our strengths while creating boundless opportunities to surpass the collective history of the land-grant movement. Our future lies in the preservation of our natural resources and the educational development of our human resources. As Abraham Lincoln said, "Upon the subject of education, I can only say that I view it as the most important subject that we as a people can be engaged in."

As we approach the 21st century, let us review our distinctive land-grant commitment to scientific research, innovative teaching, and extension services to meet the agricultural needs of the world. This commitment will, however, create new demands for substantial

national investments in the land-grant system. It will also create new tensions in public policy and governance issues. This is a challenge that cannot be overlooked as we approach a new era.

As we attempt to focus more on issues and concerns of people, society will demand a greater stake in determining how we address critical issues. Within the coming century several factors must be addressed.

First, the role of agriculture in higher education must be clearly defined. Currently, some believe that the term agriculture is all encompassing. Others tend to link agriculture and natural resources. Still others tie agriculture and the life sciences, and some groups relate agriculture, forestry, and home economics. Perhaps the definition of agriculture should be re-examined. One should look at agriculture as being holistic and involving the following:

- the land and its natural resources;
- the production and management of food and fiber; the processing, marketing, and distribution of our food and fiber; and
- the economics and policies involved in all the above.

Agriculture in the system of higher education should be geared toward developing human resources in all four areas.

Second, human capital must be properly deployed. During the next century there will be a significant shift in the mix of students. Projected increases in enrollment will come primarily from minority groups. Reports indicate that by the year 2001, the majority of students attending college in California and Texas will be Hispanics and blacks. Our institutions must lead the challenge of educating these groups, who, if not trained and provided adequate access to meaningful career opportunities, will diminish significantly the scientific and technical capabilities of the U.S. work force. The agricultural community must also be able to refocus its attention and provide educational opportunities for the increasing number of second-career workers who will require new skills.

To be competitive we must assume a more assertive role in creating meaningful programs for working mothers who are now the primary provider of the family's income. This new clientele will require the creation of new support systems. There is serious concern about the importance of raising admission standards at a time when higher education must respond to the growing underclass. As we raise our

standards and entrance requirements, are we excluding a critical segment of our society and denigrating the great American dream which promises equal opportunity for all?

Agriculture must be prepared to be competitive in the market-place. In order to survive, colleges of agriculture will have to market themselves attractively with creative approaches such as: providing high school partnership programs to improve transition, developing early freshman intervention programs, encouraging retention of students perceived to be at risk, providing substantive academic advice and strengthening student support services, and establishing special tutorial and enrichment programs.

The great challenge of the coming century is that America must find methods of developing and using the varied potential of this diverse population.

These students are the Nation's future and must be granted access if we tend to thrive in the 21st century and beyond. The social and economic state of black America and the Nation compel us to make a radical shift in the business of educating future generations. Declining participation of blacks in higher education and the disproportionate underrepresentation of blacks in the physical, chemical, and biological sciences demand a bold substantial response from the land-grant community. In 1984-85, only 3.4 percent of all doctorate recipients in the Nation were black in contrast to 74.1 percent who were white Americans. As highlighted in *One-Third of a Nation*, "in computer sciences, only one black received a doctorate out of 355 awarded in 1986. In mathematics, blacks received only six of the 730 doctorates awarded that year."

In the same year, 89 blacks earned doctorates in the sciences and 14 Ph.D's were awarded to blacks in engineering. Even worse, in the agricultural sciences black Americans represent fewer than 0.25 percent of all master's degrees and fewer than 1.5 percent of doctorates. These data are compelling in a society that is losing its competitive edge in domestic and international markets because we are unwilling to use the richness, creativity, and diversity of the Nation's land-grant systems.

Building partnerships is an important element in increasing the number of black Americans in the agricultural sciences. Black land-grant colleges and universities must become a dynamic new force in

higher education—a force that future generations need, USDA needs, and the Nation needs.

Finally, we must realistically address two other societal issues facing agriculture as we enter the next century: food safety and the environment.

Food Safety

During the next century, the American people will increase the demand for a risk-free society. Food contaminants, bio-hazards, insecticides, and animal growth hormones will be severely restricted; and the importance of banning products in the absence of expensive research will be heightened. Agriculture will be forced to inhibit production through chemical or hormonal means, though they are economically sound and rational.

Biotechnology, the buzz word of academia and agroindustry, will continue to flourish, but who will pay the price? Already there are visible signs of resistance from those who doubt the safety and efficacy of biotechnologically produced materials. The conflict of social-vs-health-vs-ethical-vs economic implications of biotechnology must be resolved by the academic community in partnership with the Federal and business sectors. The Nation's preeminence in science and technology is being challenged. The land-grant community must maintain its leadership in technology by producing a scientifically literate society at every level of the economy from food vendors to Wall Street economists. The academy must take the leadership.

The Environment

Environmental issues surfaced more than a decade ago. Agriculture recognized the need to address critical issues and proposed such initiatives as soil and water conservation, alternative agriculture, and natural resource management. But again, we became bogged down with policy issues rather than appropriate research and technological innovations to effect change.

Agriculture and the land-grant community must be more assertive and public in proclaiming their virtues. For many years, the 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities remained silent partners in agriculture. Today, we are improving our faculty, conducting research for the future, publishing a greater number of papers, interacting with the Congress, and assertively marketing our programs. The policymakers and USDA have responded positively. Through the efforts of a task

force created by the Secretary of Agriculture and made up of top-level USDA career appointees, several initiatives crucial to promoting excellence in the agricultural sciences are being undertaken. These include 1890 capacity building, co-locating facilities on our campuses, providing opportunities for exchange of our facilities with USDA agencies, and providing students with work experiences through internships and cooperative education.

The land-grant community must be better prepared to address the problems of global climate change, organic depletion, deforestation, and acid rain.

During the next century, the issue of animal welfare will become inextricably tied to environmental issues as animal rights activists gain greater public support. Rather than anticipate their actions, let us embark on a massive educational campaign to heighten public awareness about the use of animals in research. Inform our young people through seminars, publications, and the media that animals can be properly cared for in controlled environments.

A Commitment to the Future

The key element, as we ponder the future, will be leadership. As leaders of the land-grant movement, we will be challenged by politically aware students, a demanding faculty, and a public that will question the yield on their investment in tax dollars. We, as administrators, cannot shun our responsibilities or minimize the role of students, faculty, and the public. We have been charged with the responsibility of challenging students and faculty to achieve excellence. The future will demand that universities explore a range of possibilities for improving instruction, evaluating the tracking process, and creating a wider selection of flexible educational opportunities. Faculty will not assume stature simply because of their pioneering research, but because they are great artists whose art is conveyed through the transmission of knowledge.

Research will have its place but not at the expense of creating intellectual tension in the classroom. Given the influx of an ethnically different mix of students, we must strongly support equality of opportunity through the achievement of excellence. As more minorities enter our institutions, they will demand integrity in the academic program. A grade of "A" will have to be validated based on student and faculty performance. An "A" must stand for achievement and performance in the classroom, library, or laboratory. Higher education

is a place where great minds engage in democratic social relationships unaffected by ethnic and economic differences. Thus, higher education should transform students intellectually and socially.

Students should emerge from higher education with an understanding of both individual rights and responsibilities and with some perspective of the human role in God's universe. The challenge to gain sound values is beautifully worded in a *Miami Herald* newspaper headline of several months ago. "Moral citizens aren't born; they're educated." I challenge you to assist students in becoming critically aligned with democratic principles and values that can elevate people beyond the social malaises of the world.

Let me address specifically the 1890 community for a moment. As we approach the 21st century, we will undergo constant curriculum revitalization. Our 1890 universities cannot afford the luxury of becoming so highly specialized that we forget our history. However, our history alone will not guarantee our future survival. Specifically, I can see our agriculture curricula in the 21st century focusing on six areas:

- **Scientific literacy and competencies.** Graduates must be competent in the agricultural, physical, or biological sciences at the highest level of academic achievement.
- **Communications.** Our graduates must be able to communicate effectively in written, oral, and graphic forms.
- **Appreciation and comprehension.** Students must be firmly grounded in the arts, humanities, and the social and behavioral sciences.
- **Economics and business principles.** Students must become more competent in business and economics. Agribusiness continues to be one of our most attractive academic areas, and this trend is expected to continue.
- **Global awareness.** Students must have an appreciation of our world interdependence. They must become more aware of the impact of agriculture on world society. The need for foreign language competency is crucial.
- **And finally, thinking.** Our curriculum must encourage the development of lifelong skills. Students must become competent in problem-solving, reasoning, synthesis, logic, leadership, and management. The latter is crucial in an ever-increasing information age.

We must expand our pool of academically qualified minorities. Let us be realistic and recognize that pressures exerted on majority institutions to recruit more minorities will escalate and, given the abundance of financial resources, the competition will be fierce. Given greater diversity, we must establish innovative instructional support systems and engage in careful review, exhaustive planning, and focused implementation of our academic mission.

- In assuring the reality of our academic mission, we must motivate faculty to be more sensitive to the needs of special students and to align teaching styles with learning styles.
- Leadership and the broadening of future generations' knowledge devoid of arrogance and elitism are critical.
- Creation of incentives and rewards for faculty who demonstrate a commitment to academic excellence and institutional change is essential.

The century-old question will not go away in the 21st century. Our critics will continue to ask why we need 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities. Our answer now and through the 21st century must be "demonstrated excellence without excuse." When asked, "Why black colleges?", I say to you, be on the offensive and say, "Are Catholics asked, 'Why Notre Dame?' Are Jews asked, 'Why Brandeis?'" These institutions enrich the academy, broaden the Nation's intellectual resources, and foster the highest ideals of a democratic society.

I hope I have been able to affirm your belief in the interrelationships of our programs and the importance of agriculture and the land-grant movement in the years ahead. Let us all work together to enhance the image of agriculture and our research capability, and to increase the size and diversity of our minority expertise in the agricultural sciences. Our institutions remain confident and committed to the vigor and value of the 1890 mission as essential to our historical identity. Our history of emancipation has created extraordinary opportunities to transform the lives of millions of young men and women who may have languished unchallenged, unrevealed, and possibly shattered by an impersonal society. We must continue to magnify our history and build on our success as social equalizers of the world.

In closing, let us wish for a most successful meeting. And again I am deeply touched by the opportunity to deliver this Justin Smith Morrill lecture.

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